POWER OF THE PEOPLE:

Laurence and Fair Housing

On July 18, 1967, Lawrence adopted City Ordinance 3749. This law made it illegal to discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, or national origin in the purchase or rental of housing. Securing these fair housing protections in Lawrence marked a victory for a grassroots effort driven by people determined to end practices of segregation and spurred on by the Kansas legislature's failure to pass a statewide fair housing bill a year earlier. This exhibit tells the story of their efforts and how people working together can be a force for positive change in our community.

STRUGGLES AND SETBACKS

Founded during the nation's struggle over the spread of slavery in the 1850s, Lawrence emerged as the center of the anti-slavery movement in Kansas Territory and was considered a champion of freedom. Though proud of its anti-slavery heritage, Lawrence was not immune to the prejudiced attitudes about race that prevailed nationwide in the years following the Civil War. By the early 1900s, segregation was common—blacks could not eat in most restaurants, could sit only in restricted areas in movie theaters, and only lived in certain neighborhoods. Though embracing an open admissions policy, the University of Kansas also upheld racial separation. Black students could not play intercollegiate sports, participate in band or glee club, or join fraternities and sororities. Actions that today would be considered insensitive were not questioned. KU's pep club, known as the "KU KU Klub," marched at football games wearing white robes.

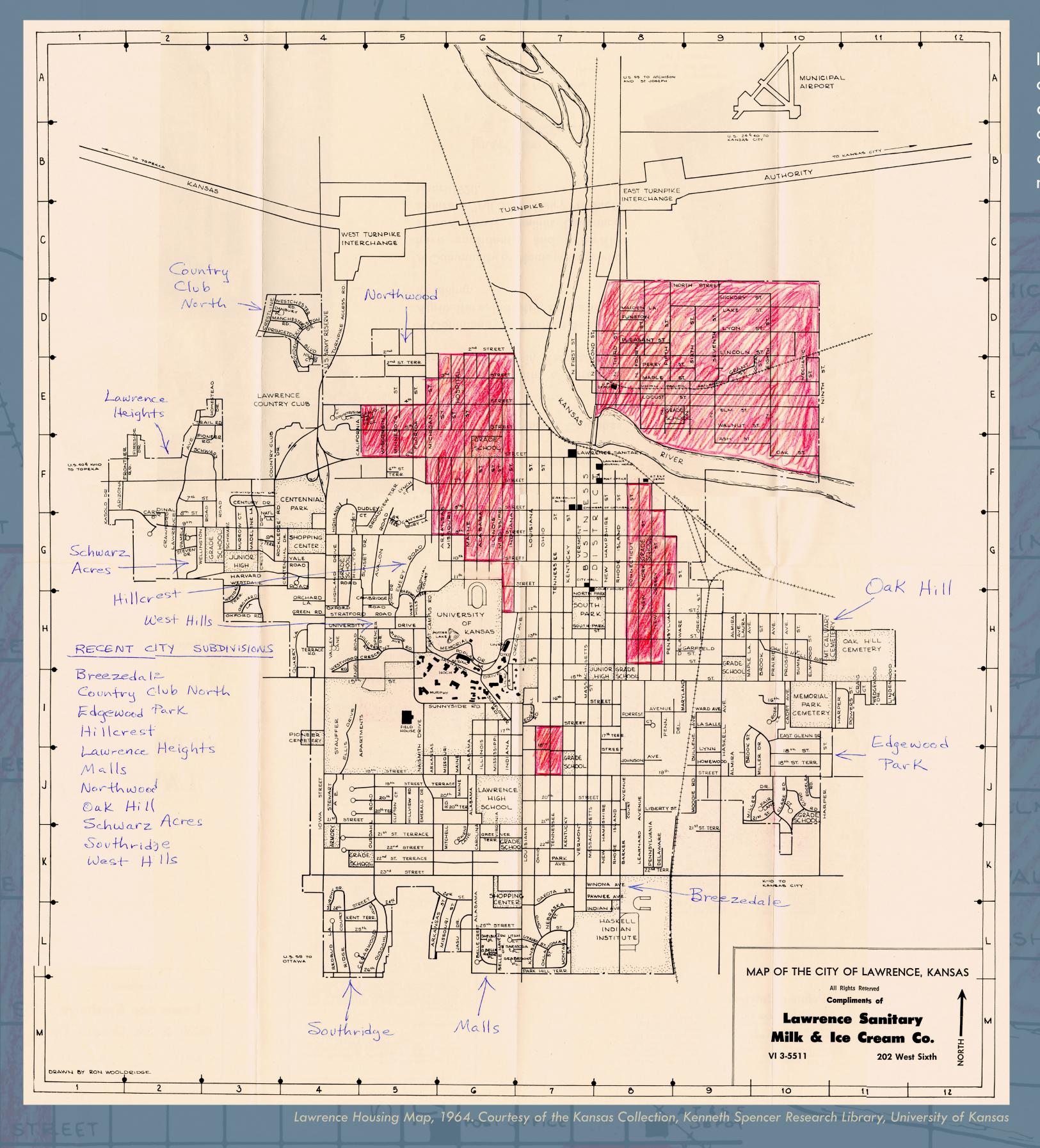
In the 1930s, brave individuals in Lawrence challenged racial discrimination. John McLendon, an African American KU student and future NBA coach, took action to end discriminatory practices at the University swimming pool. As the nation fought for democracy in Europe during World War II, organizations began to champion civil rights at home. Troops used to equal treatment by residents of the European towns and cities where they were deployed returned to the U.S. to face discrimination. Lawrence soldier Corporal Wesley S. Sims, Jr. recounted in a letter to the Daily Journal-World in November, 1945 how he and his wife visited a local theater where "the manager had the police put us, both members of the Armed Forces, out, because we would not move to the other side of the balcony." The incident caused Cpl. Sims to wonder "just what was I fighting for?"

And segregation was right under the surface and there was always this call in the background of the New Englander tradition, a call of outrage that this shouldn't occur.

- Judge Fred Six, Secretary of the Lawrence Human Relations Commission in 1967

By 1947 a local chapter of the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) was formed in Lawrence. CORE was dedicated to ending segregation and staged sitins to challenge the policies of several cafes near the KU campus. Civil rights at KU and in the community gained a high-profile champion when Franklin D. Murphy was named chancellor in 1950. Murphy was a strong supporter of racial equality. He offered to show first-run films on campus to urge Lawrence movie theaters to end segregated seating and encouraged KU's recruitment of basketball standout Wilt Chamberlain, believing it would help overcome intolerance.

As civil rights protests spread across the nation in the 1960s, community members in Lawrence became activists too. In 1960, the Lawrence League for the Practice of Democracy (LLPD) and the local chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) protested to desegregate the all-white Jayhawk Plunge swimming pool. Although the pool's owner closed the facility rather than desegregate it, the protest set the stage for a decade of social activism. In 1965, KU students conducted a sit-in outside the chancellor's office to demand open housing on and off campus regardless of race. Black students at Lawrence High School also fought for civil rights. Between 1968 and 1970, African American high school students staged protests demanding the hiring of black teachers and counselors, the integration of the cheerleading squad, and the introduction of courses in African American history and literature.



Imagine being told where you could and could not live. This map shows the areas of Lawrence where African American residents could buy a house or rent an apartment. Black students at KU could not find housing near campus. Regardless of what they could afford to buy, black families were shown houses only in these areas. Citizens both black and white reacted against this injustice and started a movement demanding fair housing for all.



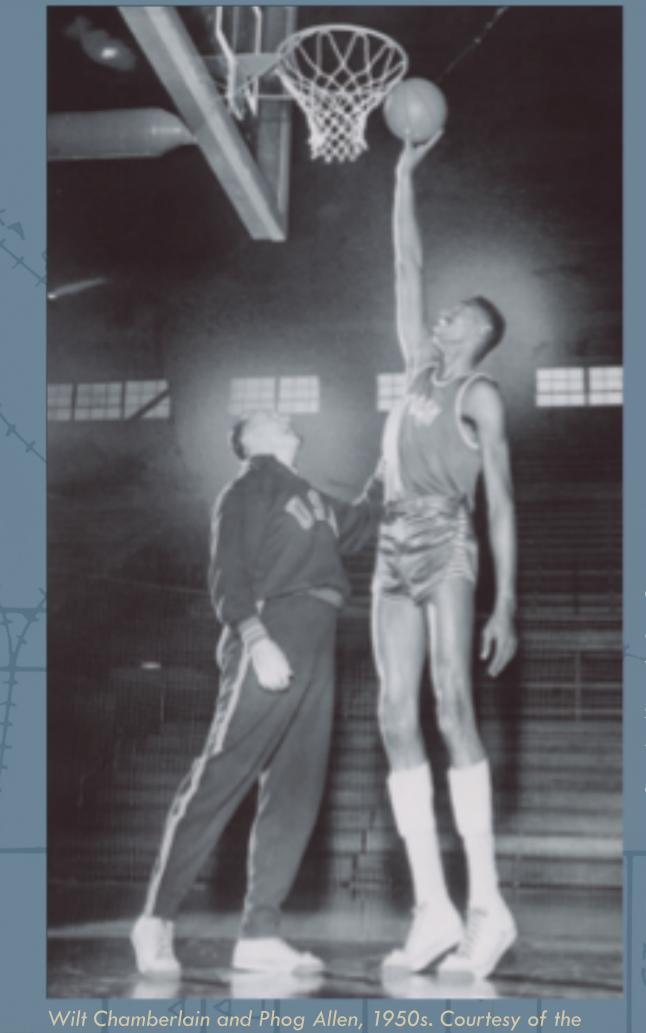
Outraged by what they considered the "bogus" pro-slavery government established by the Kansas territorial elections of 1854—when thousands of pro-slavery Missourians came across the border to cast fraudulent votes—free-state supporters determined to organize and fight back. This broadside promoted the convention held in Big Springs to establish the Free State Party. The Party chose Lawrence as its headquarters. A period of violence followed, with pro- and antislavery factions facing off in several armed conflicts. In 1856, Lawrence was sacked by proslavery "border ruffians" and the Eldridge Hotel burned. By 1857, the free-state movement won control of the legislature and began drafting an anti-slavery constitution. Kansas was admitted to the Union, as a free state, in 1861.



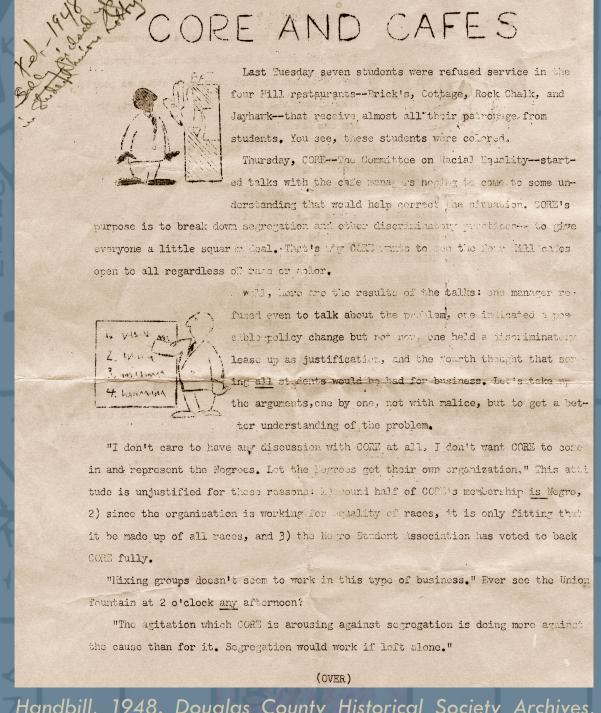
TOP ROW: McLendon, trainer; Waters, Copeland, Terill, Coach Noll. BOTTOM ROW: Jackson, Bell, Bowers, McCoy, Hayes.

Lawrence Promoters Basketball Team, (coached by John McLendon, at far left), 1936. Douglas County Historical Society Archives

Though embracing a racially open admissions policy, the University of Kansas upheld racial separation on campus. When John McLendon entered KU in the 1930s, African American students were barred from intercollegiate athletics and many campus organizations. They sat in segregated areas at basketball games and in the cafeteria. The swimming requirement was waived for black students, who were only allowed to use the pool on the last day of the month, before it was drained. A Physical Education major, McLendon argued that he be able to take the swimming test. He convinced the University to suspend policies of segregation and, if no race-related incidents occurred for two weeks, to integrate the pool permanently. McClendon's challenge was successful and the KU pool was permanently integrated.



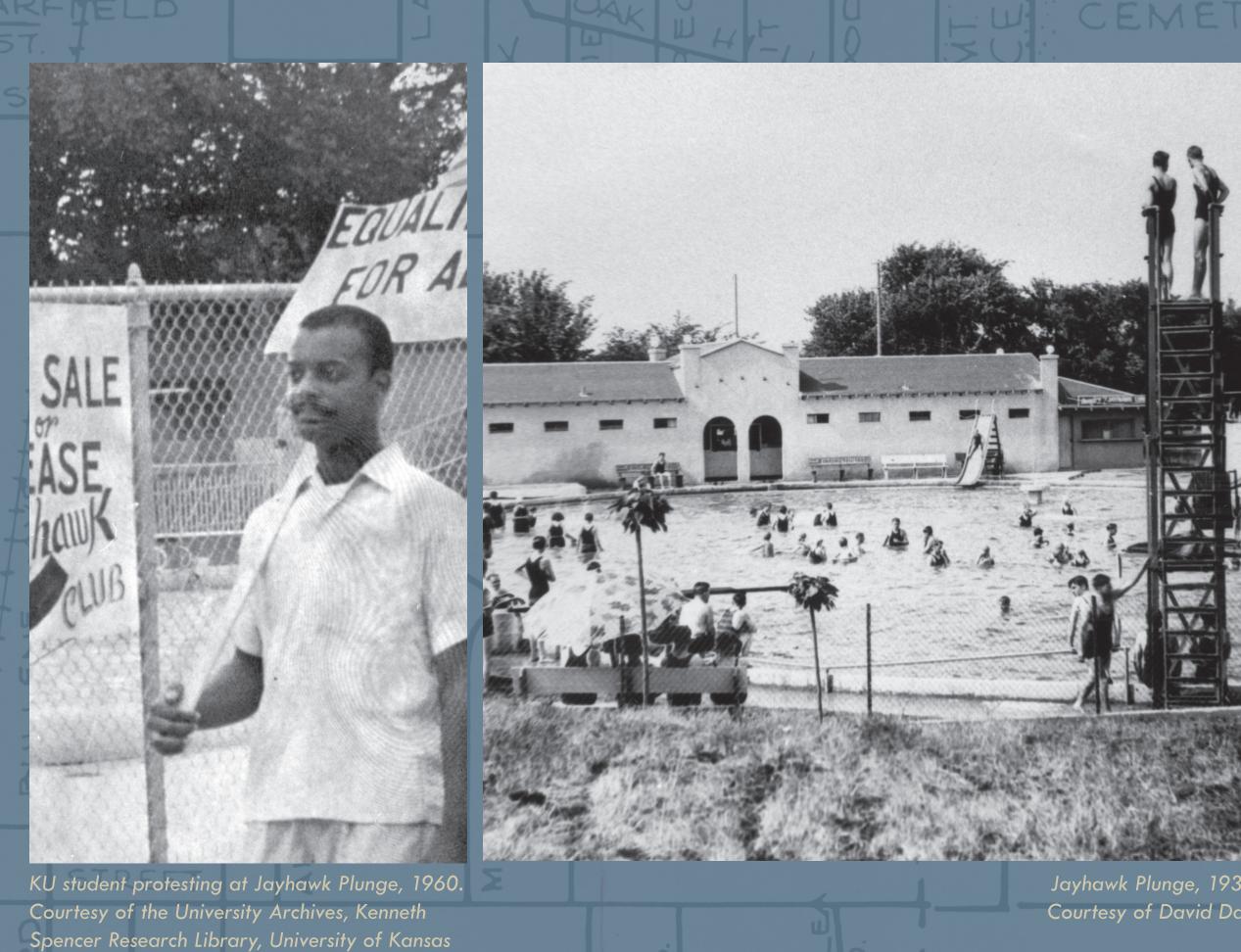
Celebrated as a good sportsman and encouraged to make public appearances, Wilt Chamberlain made a point of visiting segregated establishments in Lawrence, where he was not turned away. In the fall of 1957, he and fellow African American athletes at the University of Kansas, Homer Floyd, Charlie Tidwell, and Ernie Shelby, met with Chancellor Franklin Murphy to demand an end to segregated businesses and business practices in Lawrence.



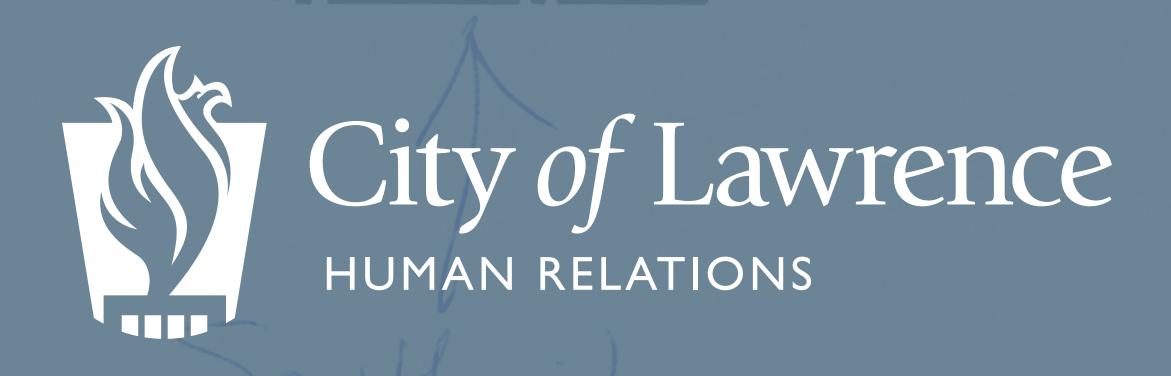
This anti-segregation handbill was distributed by local members of the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) at the KU student union. CORE pointed out examples of discrimination against black students to build awareness on campus. Flyers like this challenged generally accepted practices of racial segregation in Lawrence. Frustrated by the lack of response to their efforts to engage the owners of segregated establishments in dialogue about change, they resorted to staging sit-ins and other public protests.



In April 1970, after a year and a half of protests and unsuccessful negotiations, black students at Lawrence High School expressed their frustration by forcing their way into the principal's office to demand action. Fights broke out between white and black students. The police intervened with tear gas and clubs. Ultimately, administrators met the students' demands for the hiring of black teachers and counselors, the integration of the cheerleading squad, and the introduction of courses in African American history and literature.



Before 1968, Lawrence had no public swimming pool. Whites had access to the privately-owned Jayhawk Plunge; blacks and other racial minorities had no choice but to swim in the Kansas River. After an attempt to desegregate the Jayhawk Plunge swimming pool in 1960 failed, community activists challenged the City to build an integrated city-owned pool. Three-hundred people—carrying signs with slogans such as "I want to swim in Lawrence" and "Wanted: A Desegregated Heart"—participated in a "Freedom March" from St. Luke AME Church to the Douglas County Courthouse in 1963. Their efforts were ultimately successful when, in 1967, residents voted to approve a bond issue to fund a City pool. An integrated pool opened to the public the following year.





The work that provided the basis for this exhibit was supported by funding under a Cooperative Agreement with the U.S. Department of Housing and

for the accuracy of the statements and interpretations contained herein. Such interpretations do not necessarily reflect the views of the Government.

Urban Development. The substance and findings of the work are dedicated to the public. The City of Lawrence and Watkins Museum are solely responsible

TIPS FOR SUCCESSFUL ACTIVISM

#1 ORGANIZE

- Plan events or use social media to call attention to the issues
- Engage with people one-on-one about the issues
- Build a coalition of support
- Find resources to cover expenses like feeding volunteers, mailings, protest signs, or flyers
- Support volunteers by arranging for transportation or childcare

CHANGE FROM THE BOTTOM UP

The push for fair housing legislation arose as part of a national civil rights movement fighting practices of segregation and discrimination. In Lawrence, individuals and groups organized to voice their experiences of unequal housing practices. Social advocate organizations, charities, churches, and University of Kansas staff all supported fair housing protections. Their involvement lent institutional support that included significant portions of the community and strengthened the efforts of individual activists. The KU community argued in favor of fair housing to support faculty, staff, and future employees who might refuse to work and live in a town that tolerated discrimination.

In 1964, the Lawrence branch of the NAACP released Survey of the Lawrence Negro, which outlined the economic and social discrimination African Americans faced in Lawrence, including access to fair housing. The same year, the United Church Women of Lawrence (UCWL) circulated a letter regarding fair housing in the city. Twenty-five churches made the letter and petition available to their congregations. Nearly 900 individuals signed in support of fair housing practices. By the end of 1964, the NAACP, the UCWL, the League of Women Voters, and other organizations joined forces to create the Lawrence Fair Housing Coordinating Committee. Citizens adopted a methodical approach that took advantage of strong community support for fair housing and worked within established governmental systems to achieve their goal.

Well, I guess I'd have to be proud of the fact that we did stand up for what we thought were our rights, that we did not falter when things did not go

OUR Way...

- Dorothy Harvey, NAACP Member and Fair Housing Activist in 1967

Experiences of discriminatory housing practices in Lawrence were varied and personal. Many citizens shared stories of realtors refusing to show homes in specific neighborhoods and of landlords who claimed all the apartments in a building being constructed were leased upon learning the ethnicity of an applicant or who refused to rent to individuals of color and interracial families. They presented their case to the Lawrence Human Relations Commission, an advisory group formed in 1961 to address inequality in the city. HRC acted in early 1965 to "find constructive, orderly solutions to unequal housing opportunities."



In the 1940s and '50s racial prejudices remained common. Discrimination affected the lives of all racial minorities in Lawrence, particularly African Americans. In some theaters, black customers were required to sit in separate sections humiliatingly outlined by a paint stripe across the back of the seat or had to sit in the balcony. When the movie ended, they were made to wait until white customers left the theater. The Granada, like many local restaurants, completely refused service to blacks.



Study Number 10 from The Lower Twenty-five Percent, a housing study conducted for a sociology class at the University of Kansas, 1938-39
Douglas County Historical Society

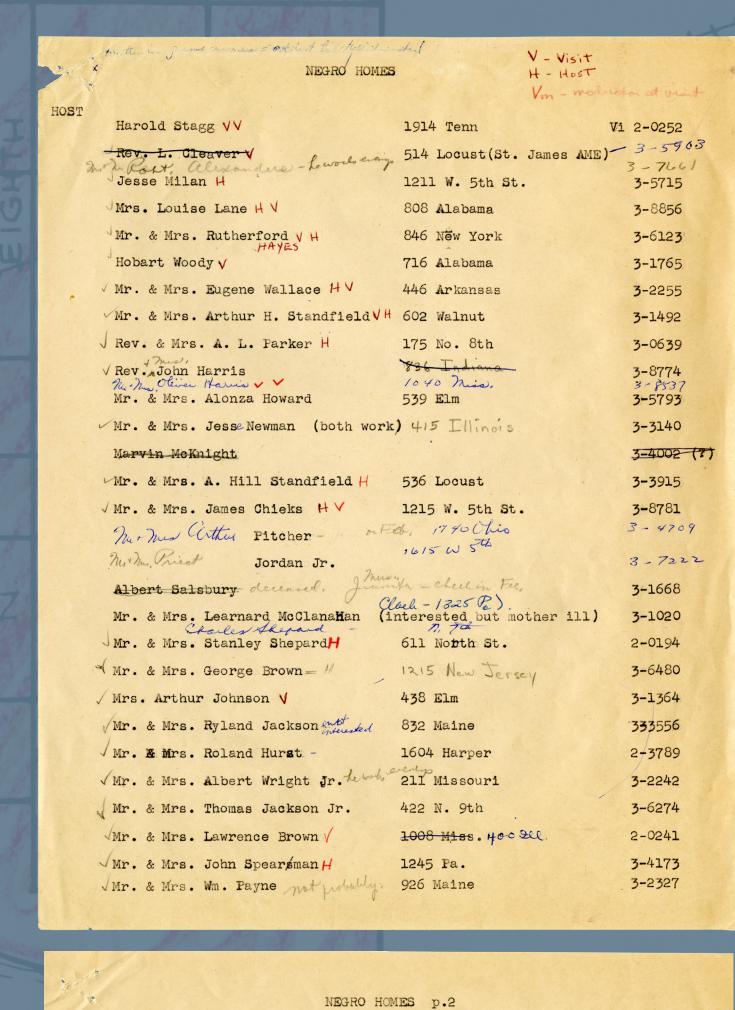
A Depression-era study of housing conditions among the poor and unemployed in Lawrence highlighted the deplorable living conditions endured by the city's poorest residents, many of them African Americans and Mexican Americans. Many of the areas described in the study as affording only "run-down" or "shabby"

housing were primarily populated by African Americans and other racial minorities.



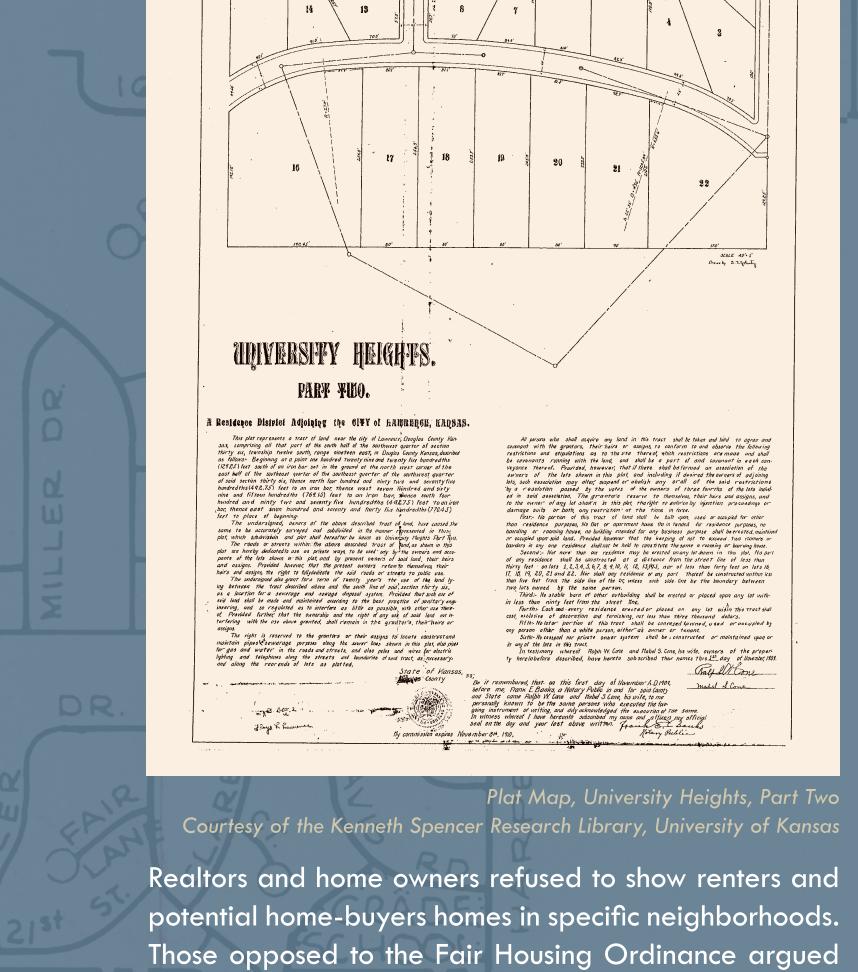


Starting in the years after WWII and reaching national consciousness in the 1960s, the civil rights movement sought to address social, economic, and civil inequalities for marginalized communities, primarily African Americans, in the United States. Individuals denied access to jobs, public spaces, housing, and basic civil rights such as voting, protested and campaigned throughout the 1960s to end systematic oppression. National campaigns inspired protests and the formation of civil rights organizations locally, including those spearheading efforts for fair housing in Lawrence. Local branches of national organizations, including NAACP and CORE, along with local organizations such as the Lawrence League for the Practice of Democracy, worked for change in Lawrence while national movements attempted to sway the federal government.

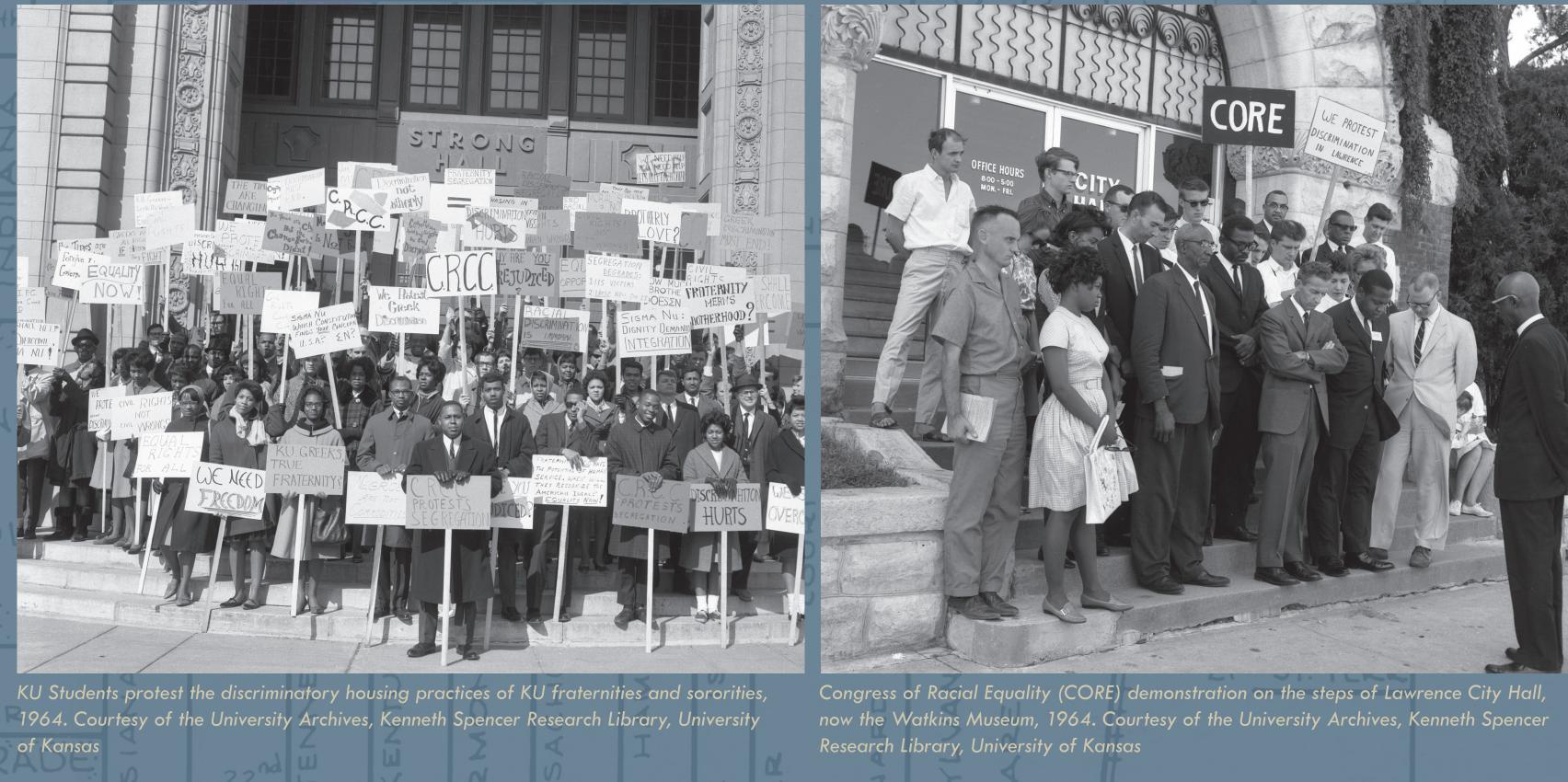


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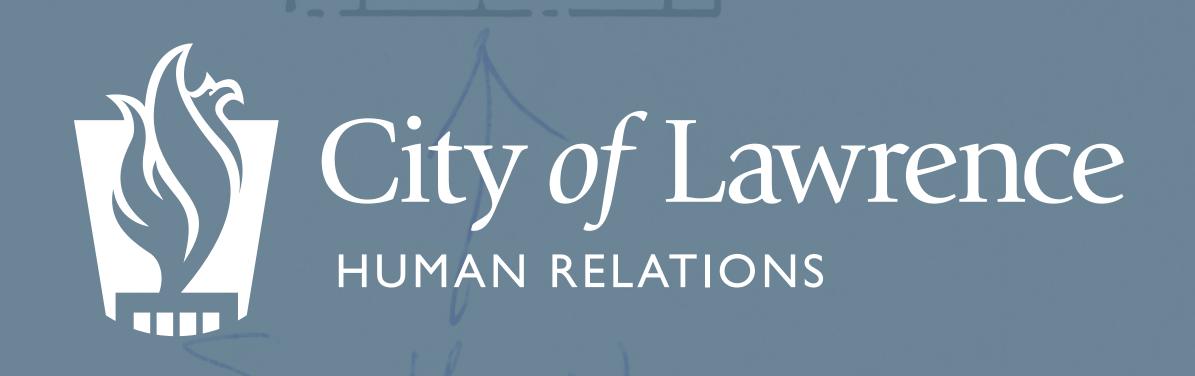
NAACP Survey of Negro Homes Courtesy of the Kenneth Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas How does where you live affect your life? For African Americans in Lawrence during the civil rights era it was an indication of larger inequalities. A housing survey conducted by the NAACP in 1963-64 found that, in addition to facing discrimination when choosing a place to live, African Americans in Lawrence experienced disadvantages when seeking employment and limited economic opportunities overall.



Realtors and home owners refused to show renters and potential home-buyers homes in specific neighborhoods. Those opposed to the Fair Housing Ordinance argued that neighborhood desegregation would decrease property values. Restrictive covenants, clauses included in a deed or lease that limit what the owner can do with the property or to whom it could be sold, were often used to ensure that neighborhoods remained segregated.



In 1947, University of Kansas students organized a local chapter of the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE). They worked to build awareness of discrimination on campus, staged anti-segregation protests, and fought for equal housing for KU students. CORE's mid-1960s campaign to end discrimination in campus housing and social organizations extended naturally to the issue of fair housing in the city. They were among the community organizations that built support for equal housing and worked to pass legislation in Lawrence.





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TIPS FOR SUCCESSFUL ACTIVISM

#2 ENGAGE

- Make the problems known at the relevant level of government — local, state, federal
- Present attainable solutions or desired results
- Understand the legislative process at the level of government where you seek change
- Request meetings to personally engage with your governmental representatives

PASSING LEGISLATION

Residents of Lawrence began considering a fair housing ordinance after the failure of the Kansas fair housing legislation in 1965 and as the federal government began considering a federal Fair Housing bill. The debate over fair housing became heated. The Lawrence Real Estate Board (LREB) placed a full-page advertisement in opposition in 1965. To counter the LREB advertisement, CORE and the Lawrence chapter of the NAACP ran a "Facts on Fair Housing" advertisement. The members of the Lawrence Fair Housing Coordinating Committee sent a letter to the mayor in 1966, notifying him of their intent to pursue a city fair housing ordinance.

Individuals who stood up for fair housing risked their employment, their homes, and in at least one case, received death threats. In January 1967, Rev. Richard Dulin of the Lawrence Fair Housing Coordinating Committee presented the Human Relations Commission a resolution calling for the formal presentation of a fair housing ordinance to the Lawrence City Commission. Approximately 50 people spoke on behalf of LFHCC about their experiences with housing discrimination. In a separate meeting, the LREB spoke at length against the local ordinance as the issue was debated.

We have to recognize the importance of supporting diversity and recognizing that people from different cultures, different backgrounds, their major objectives in life are pretty much the same...

- Homer Floyd, Director of the Kansas State Commission on Civil Rights in 1967

As the ordinance was being prepared for presentation to the Lawrence City Commission, the issue was brought to public attention. An advertisement appeared in the Lawrence Daily Journal-World in February 1967 with signatures from nearly 1,000 Lawrencians supporting equal housing opportunity. The next month, an advertisement with an additional 112 names of fair housing supporters appeared in the same paper. The Lawrence City Commission heard extensive information from the community in favor of equal housing and from the LREB in opposition. Finally, in July 1967, City Ordinance 3749, enacting fair housing protections, was adopted by the Lawrence City Commission and signed into law by Mayor Dick Raney. The ordinance was one of the first fair housing laws passed by a city in Kansas. It preceded the federal Fair Housing Act by nine months. Kansas passed a statewide law preventing housing discrimination in 1970. Hailed as a great victory for civil rights in Lawrence, the Fair Housing Ordinance did not end housing discrimination, but became and remains today the legal basis to challenge it.

A MESSAGE TO OUR FELLOW CITIZENS

We, the undersigned residents of Lawrence, are desirous that persons of all races and creeds have equal opportunity for housing in our community. We encourage "open occupancy" in all neighborhoods, including the neighborhood in which we live. We welcome our neighbors on the basis of their ability to be "good neighbors" and encourage sales and rentals of homes in our neighborhood on that basis alone. (The Following Persons Have Signed This Statement and Many of Them Have Shared in The Cost of This Advertisement)

future of the University should Lawrence be seen as backwards and discriminatory. The Lawrence Fair Housing Coordinating • The Lawrence Council of Churches Church Women United

> Lawrence Daily Journal-World fair housing letter, 1967 Courtesy of the Kenneth Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas

E DAILY JOURNAL-WORLD Lawrence Real Estate Board STATEMENT OF POSITION ON HOUSING The Lawrence Real Estate Board is now and always has been for FAIR housing, for equitable housing and for any sensible, practical and constitutional effort to improve housing conditions not only for We opposed Senate Bill #166 because of a number of its provisions which had no connection with race, creed, color or national origin. It proposed to take away from any citizen his right to use, sell, rent or lease his real property as his judgment dictated. It proposed to impair if not abolish the right of contract. It proposed to hold in sus-

Public support helped convince community officials to enact a fair housing ordinance. Many

community members who faced discriminatory housing practices risked their personal safety

and employment to speak publically about their experiences. Lawrencians who did not face

discrimination also supported the call for fair housing. Nearly 1,000 community members

signed a letter published in the Daily Journal-World to encourage equal housing practices.

KU employees' support was crucial to the ordinance's success. They voiced concern over the

untrue. It proposed to reverse the basic principle of law that the accused is presumed innocent until proven guilty. It proposed imprisonment without trial by jury. It failed to provide any redress for one unjustly accused or maligned. In essence it proposed to eliminate the basic right of any citizen to control his own property. Our country was founded and settled by those from foreign shores who felt that freedom of religion, freedom of speech and the freedom to own and use real property subject to taxes and controls of their own making and approval were the foundation upon which a truly great nation could be built. We fully agree with this philosophy. We believe that men of good will can solve their problems, however distressing, with work and education within our present framework of democratic government. We still believe that "A man's home is his castle" be it mansion or hovel. The philosophy of "curbing the property-owning class" is a Maxist-Socialistic doctrine. The adherents of this philosophy constantly push and advocate such changes in the hope of taking over or seriously weakening our present system of democratic government. Discrimination and inequality in housing provide an ideal vehicle to advance their cause. We feel sure that most of those who worked so diligently for the passage of Senate Bill #166 were so enamored by the noble-

pension real property transfers for an indefinite period upon a charge

of discrimination even though such charge might later be determined

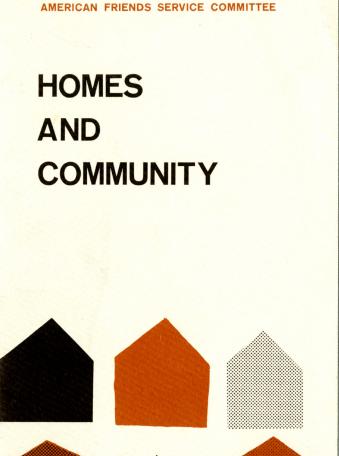
ness of their purpose that they either overlooked or failed to see its many pitfalls. This is further understandable because so very few of its proponents have had any substantial experience in owning, managing or selling real property. We believe that committing an injustice to some in an attempt to relieve an injustice to others is neither right nor a solution to housing problems. Two wrongs never make a right. Lawrence Real Estate Board letter, 1965 Courtesy of the Kenneth Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas

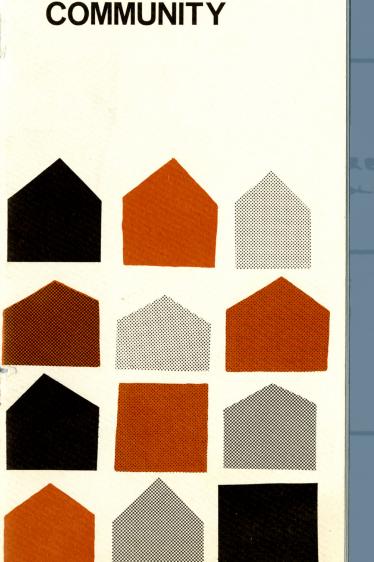
The Lawrence Real Estate Board (LREB) opposed fair housing legislation.

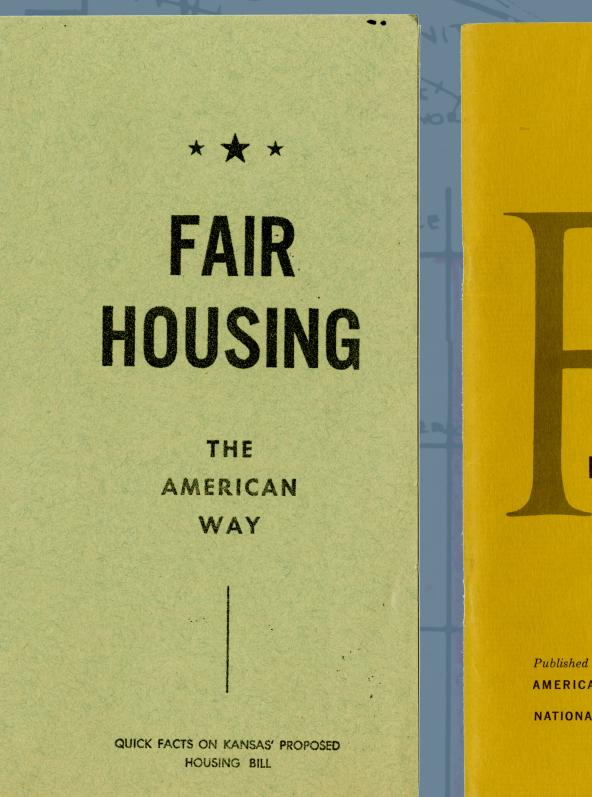
Representatives from the LREB argued that restricting home owners, landlords,

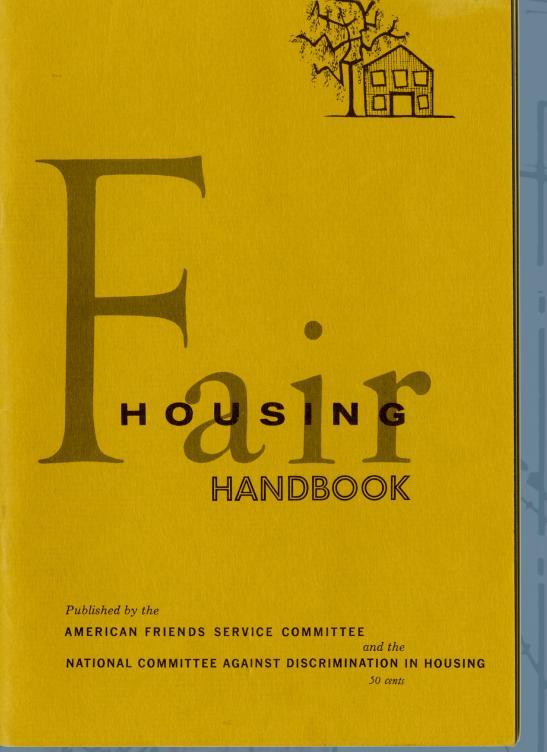
or real estate agents from selling or contracting with individuals of their choosing

amounted to preventing owners from acting on their own best judgement.

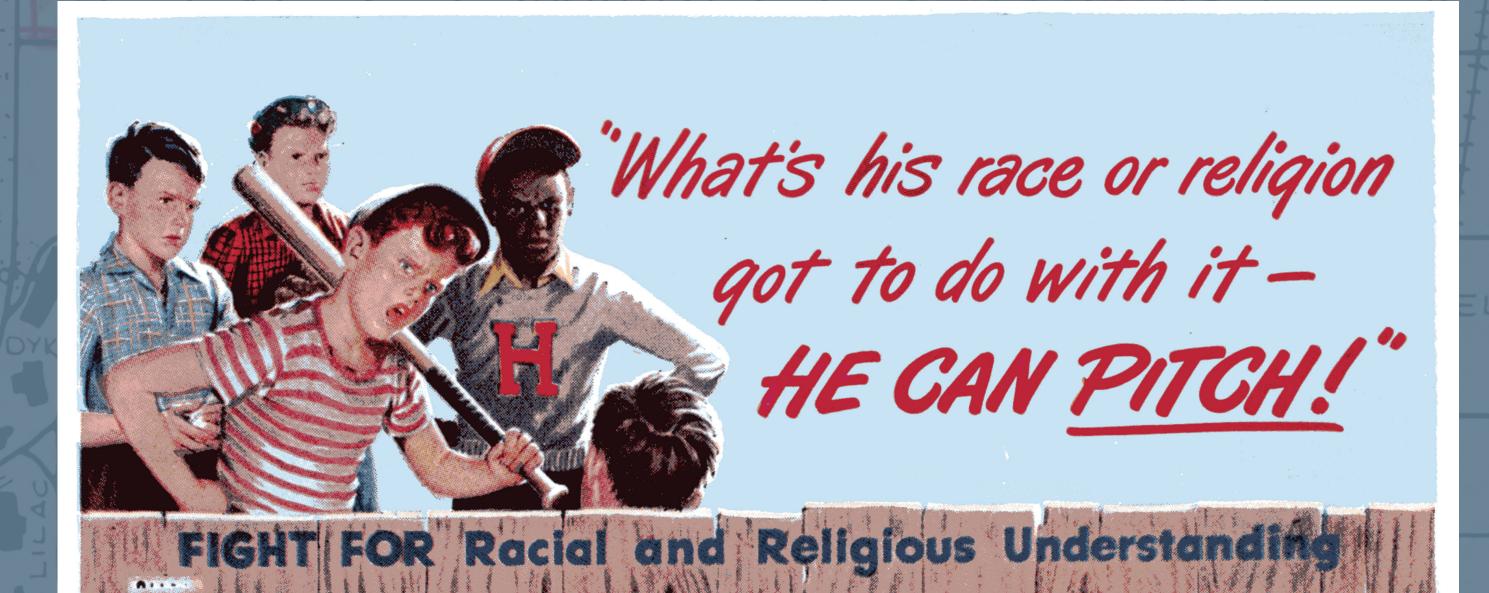








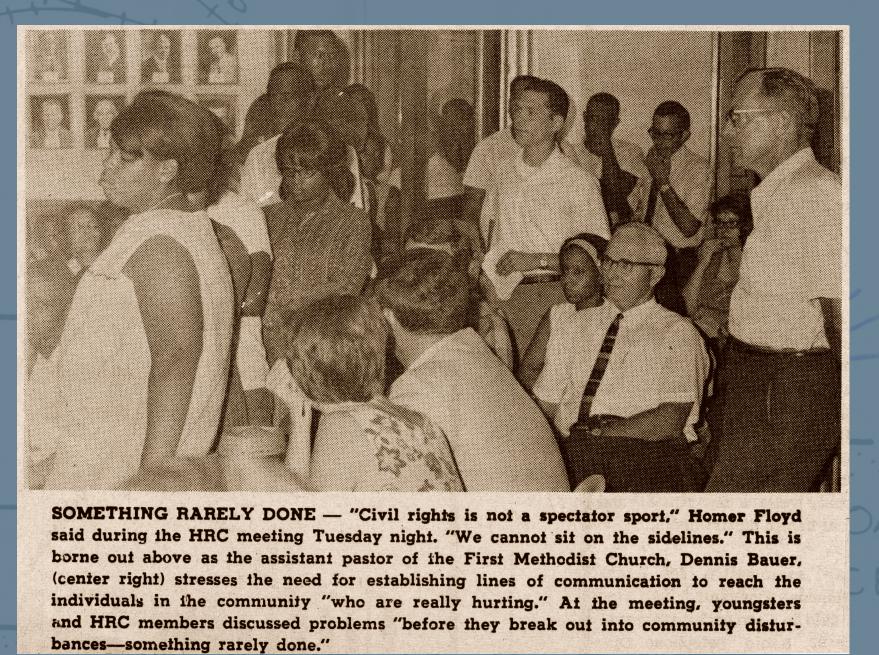
Fair Housing Brochures. Courtesy of the Kenneth Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas Throughout the 1960s Fair Housing was an important issue on the local, state, and national levels. Like many communities working to institute fair housing laws, Lawrence activists gathered materials from other states and from other communities who pushed for fair housing as a way to inform the local grassroots movement.



Flyers such as this one distributed by the Lawrence League for the Practice of Democracy helped to underscore the absurdity of social barriers while highlighting society's common values.

Civil Rights Flyer, 1960s. Courtesy of the Kenneth Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas





Newspaper coverage of HRC meetings, 1967. Douglas County Historical Society The Human Relations Commission (HRC), created in 1961, provided a forum for City government to address the concerns of citizens facing discrimination and inequality. The purpose of the Commission was to eliminate discrimination. Their efforts also deescalated community tensions before they erupted in the civil unrest that gripped many cities during the 1960s. During the Fair Housing Ordinance discussions, the HRC heard from more than fifty citizens who experienced unfair housing practices and from the Lawrence Real Estate Board, the most vocal opponent of fair housing legislation.





#3 PERSUADE

- Prepare for meetings in advance
- Present your concerns and personal encounters with the issue; propose solutions concisely
- Leave written copies of your proposals and contact information
- Follow up with letters, emails, and telephone calls from your coalition to illustrate wide-spread support
- Time your follow-up activities to coordinate with legislative sessions

WORKING FOR YOU

Amid the protests of the late 1950s and early 1960s the Lawrence City Commission created the Lawrence Human Relations Commission (HRC). Since 1961, the HRC has promoted civil rights and challenged discrimination in Lawrence. In 1964, before the passage of the city's Fair Housing Ordinance, the HRC advised the development of City Ordinance 3373, which prohibited the owner, manager, or any employee of public accommodations, including hotels, restaurants, swimming pools, and other places of recreation, from providing services or access to facilities based on race, creed, color or national origins. Over time, the HRC has come to address issues of discrimination based not only on race, but on sex, religion, color, national origin, age, ancestry, sexual orientation, disability, gender identity, or family status.

The HRC exists today for the same reason it was created in 1961: "To open the way for each individual, regardless of race, creed, color, or national origin, to develop according to his abilities without limitation." The nine member commission, representing the diverse racial, ethnic, commercial, and industrial make-up of the Lawrence community, works to eliminate discrimination in employment, public accommodations, and housing. The HRC also studies the problem of discrimination and other matters that impact community relations or may have an adverse effect on good will and cooperation among the diverse groups that make up the population of Lawrence. Members volunteer their service and are appointed to three-year terms by the mayor.

Until everyone has equal access to housing, employment, and public accommodations, the work of the Human Relations Committee is still vitally important to the community.

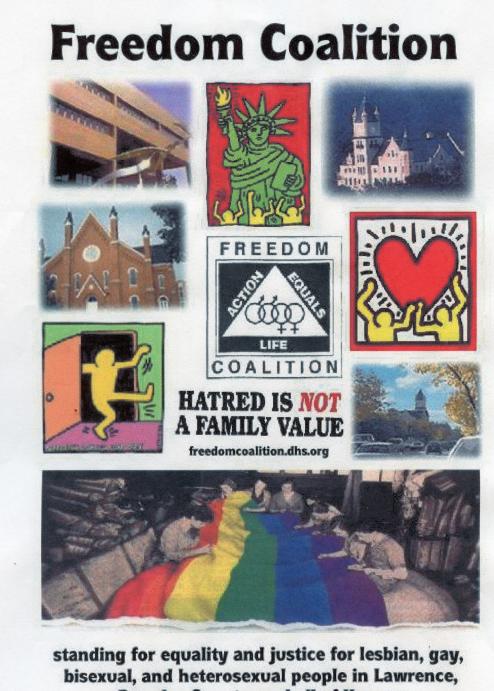
- Scott Criqui, Lawrence Human Relations Commissioner, 2009-2015

Maintaining visibility is a challenge, especially at a time when budget cutbacks are forcing many cities in Kansas to disband their human relations committees. Lawrence's HRC continues its service to the community today thanks to a partnership with the City Attorney's office. The HRC works closely with the Lawrence City Attorney's office and serves as an advocate and resource for the residents of Lawrence—increasing awareness of what constitutes discrimination today, building understanding of the protections the law provides, and following national trends to ensure Lawrence's ordinance continues to protect the community's most vulnerable. The Commission holds quarterly meetings to address, investigate, and resolve community complaints and issues of discrimination. Members of the HRC or the City Attorney's office work with people who suspect they have been discriminated against to help them understand the nuances of discrimination law. If a law has been broken, they help victims navigate what can be a very intimidating legal process.





The HRC is committed to eliminating and preventing discrimination in employment, public accommodations, and housing and assuring equal opportunity for all persons within the City of Lawrence. The Commission sponsors activities to increase public awareness of civil rights protections. Outreach activities have included seminars and educational talks during Fair Housing Month in April of each year, a Fair Housing Poster/Art contest involving students across Lawrence, and creation of educational videos to increase understanding of the law. Social media is also used to help people understand what discrimination looks like and what to do if discrimination



of all Lawrence residents.

Standing for equality and justice for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and heterosexual people in Lawrence, Douglas County, and all of Kansas

Since its initial passage, the Fair Housing Ordinance has been expanded to address the needs of many marginalized groups and individuals. While the issues themselves are not new, organizational actions and shifting public understanding has enabled new

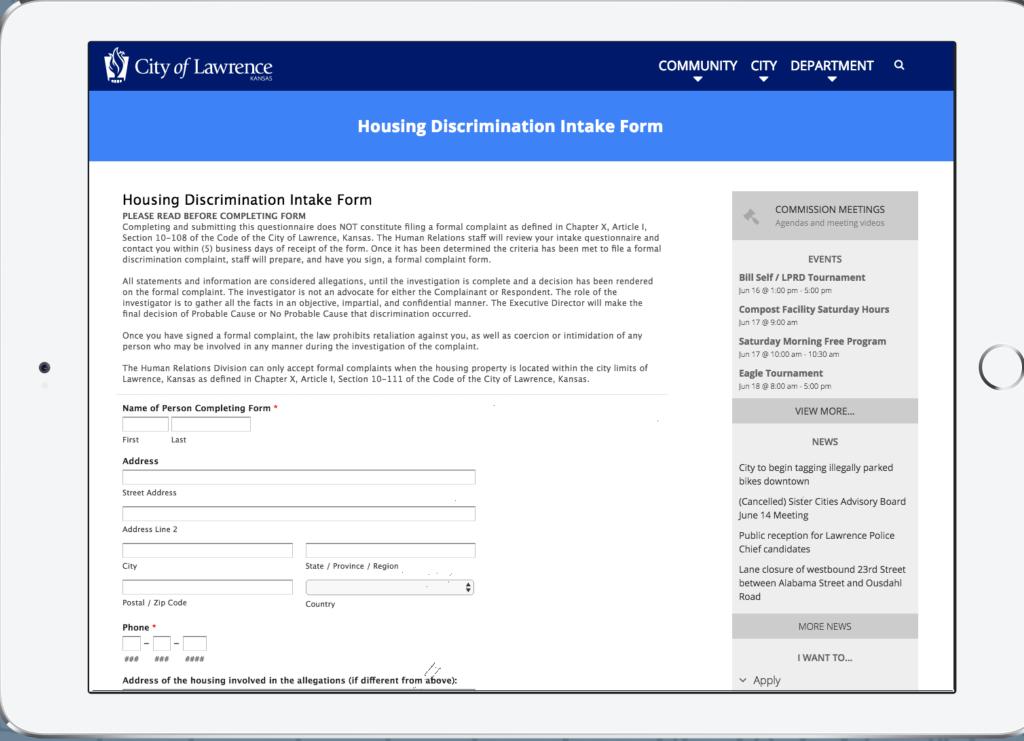
protections by law. In the 1990s, individuals and couples identifying as LGBTQ frequently faced discrimination and were denied

access to housing when their sexual orientation became known to landlords. The Freedom Coalition, an organization joining together

LGBTQ individuals and allies, successfully campaigned to demand equal access to housing regardless of sexual orientation. In recent

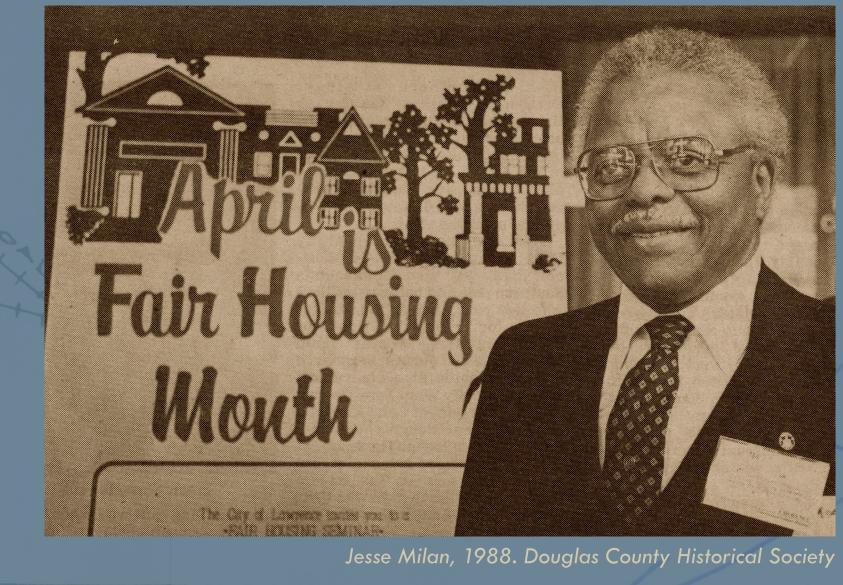
years, the widening spectrum of gender identity has been added as a protected status under the ordinance. While these protections

have not ended discrimination they have provided a legal recourse for citizens and have attempted to ensure the dignity and rights

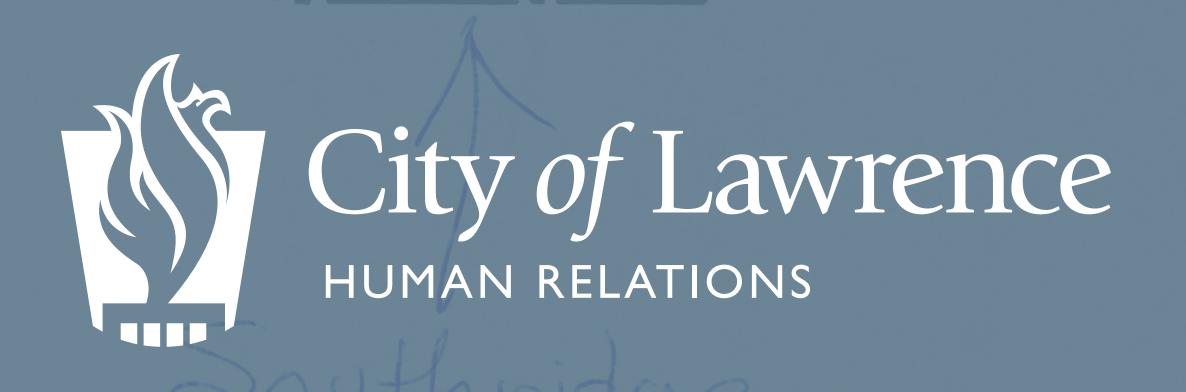


ousing Discrimination Intake Form, City of Lawrence webs

Do you feel you may have been subject to discrimination? The Lawrence Human Relations Commission can help. The HRC can be contacted by phone at (785) 832-3310, by fax at (785) 832-6198 and by e-mail at humanrelations@lawrenceks.org. The City of Lawrence makes forms to lodge complaints of discrimination in employment, housing, and public accommodation available through the City website at lawrenceks.org/attorney. When complaints are received, City Attorney's staff or Commissioners work with complainants to help them better understand their circumstances, explain how redress might be achieved, and guide them through the process. Want to get involved? The City Attorney's office accepts applications from those interested in serving on the HRC.



Since passage of Lawrence's Fair Housing Ordinance, the Human Relations Commission has continued to advocate for fair housing and address issues of discrimination in public accommodations and employment. Over time, it has worked to expand the definition of discrimination as defined in the ordinance to include sex, age, ancestry, sexual orientation, disability, gender identity, or familial status. The HRC continues to educate Lawrence residents regarding their rights and protection under the law and ensure that landlords are aware of their rights and responsibilities.





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